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20 SEP 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Building Planning Staff, OL

FROM: DDO Representative
Building Planning Staff, OL

SUBJECT: Day Care Centers

Larry:

In the event the Staff is called upon to plan for a day care center, the following may become paramount in our planning for the new building.

U.S. Department of Labor Space Requirements and
Recommendations for Child Care Centers

Internal

1. 35 square feet per child 1 1/2 years and older exclusive of bathrooms, sleeping areas, kitchens, eating areas, closed storage, mechanical and electrical space and circulation
2. 18-20 square feet per child for eating, sleeping, diapering, and toileting
3. 6-9 square feet per child for staff areas
4. 20-25 percent of gross square feet for circulation

Total: 75 square feet minimum per child
Recommended: 100 square feet per child

External

1. 100 square feet minimum allowable for outdoor recreation

Recommended: 200 sq ft per child

Fairfax County Minimum Space Requirements for Child
Care Centers

Internal

1. 20 square feet minimum per child under the age of 5, exclusive of bathrooms, lockers, kitchen, storage, and isolation room

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2. One toilet and washbowl for each 25 children attending 4 hours or less a day

One toilet, washbowl, and cot for each 15 children attending longer than 4 hours a day

External

1. 100 square feet minimum per child for outdoor recreation at any one time
2. Recreation area required to be fenced 3 feet in height or otherwise protected from traffic

Other Considerations

Child care centers are best planned for about 60 to a maximum of 75 children. When the number of children to be accommodated exceeds 75, it is recommended the program be organized into separate units. Some States specify that child care may be permitted only on the ground level. Fairfax County does not have such an ordinance. However, they do have safety codes for child care centers.

Some of the advantages by having a child care center on the ground level are:

1. Permits parents to deliver and pick up child with relative ease
2. Easier access to outside play area
3. Readily accessible to catering services

There are many design concepts of child care centers, and the Agency would benefit from professional guidance as to the environment, character, style, and scale as to how the center would relate to its surroundings.

Non-Federal Real Property Assignments

Credit Unions and blind stands have specific statutory authority regarding the conditions of their occupancy of Federal space. Other users such as day care centers, barber shops, banks, cafeterias, and other non-Government activities, along with small retail stores and welfare and recreational activities administered by employee associations, generally occupy space at the discretion of the controlling agency. In March 1974, GAO specifically commented on variations and inconsistencies among agencies in allocating Federal space to activities providing services to

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Federal employees. The GAO recommended that a uniform policy be formulated for allocating space to such activities including guidelines for determining fair and equitable charges, if any, for space and services furnished by the Government. Consequently, OMB issued a proposed circular in 1975 and again in December 1977 which would (1) standardize space assignment practices; (2) reduce Federal real property expenditures; and (3) curtail special benefits.

With respect to day care centers, the proposed circular reflects the position that an assignment for space for day care purposes constitutes an additional space acquisition that is not justified for an official Government purpose and, therefore, should not be charged to the taxpayer. Instead, day care costs should be borne by the users of the space as a personal benefit.

As a general rule, office space in Federal buildings cannot be considered "extra" or "surplus" even though the occupying agency having custody of the space may not need the space for official purposes. The following expenditures for day care centers by several agencies was one of the reasons for the proposed OMB circular.

The child care center in the HEW North Building has a capacity of 60 children and occupies 3,555 square feet of space. The cost of alterations to the building to establish the center was \$160,000.00. In addition, the Office of the Secretary, HEW, pays \$32,800 per year to GSA for occupancy of the space.

The child care center in the Office of Education occupies 2,190 square feet and has a capacity of 40 children. The cost of alterations to the building was approximately \$226,000.00, and an annual payment to GSA for occupancy of the Center is \$20,550 per year. Similarly, HUD paid approximately \$200,000.00 for alterations to establish a 60 child center with an annual payment to GSA of \$36,000.00.

The proposed OMB circular has never been issued, and there is still no clearly established Government policy concerning the allocation of space for day care purposes. The most significant policy statement to date was made by President Carter on 16 February 1977 during a question and answer session with HEW employees. The question was, "Does your Administration favor the Federal funding of day care centers for Federal employees?" His response was, "I think that I would have to answer no. I don't see why we should single out Federal employees as the only group in the nation who would uniquely be provided with day care services. I think Federal employees ought to be treated the same as other employees in private life."



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